

Vulnerability Assessments are conducted at your convenience and the information is CONFIDENTIAL. No information will be taken from your establishment. Instead, you will be left with a valuable Vulnerability Assessment document detailing potential corrective measures that will enhance the food security of your establishment.

If you would like to receive a complimentary food security vulnerability assessment for your facility, simply contact the Arizona Department of Health Services Food Biosecurity Specialist at (602) 364-3130.

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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Addressing Food Security:

The Value of A Vulnerability Assessment For Your Food Establishment



What is Food Security?

Food security covers the prevention of all dangerous agents into food or beverages. Food biosecurity is the measures or steps taken to prevent the spread of biological disease in food. Other agents may pose a threat to food such as chemical, radiological or physical.

Aren't food security and food safety the same thing?

When speaking about food security, we must first separate it from food safety. The National Restaurant Association makes a good distinction. Food safety involves the unintentional contamination of food during processing, production, operational defects or improper food handling. Once an individual is educated with the proper methods and understands them, there is a greater likelihood that food safety can be achieved.

Food security, on the other hand, is a different story. Here, one is looking at the deliberate introduction of a dangerous substance into food. Since it is an intentional act, prevention, rather than education, is the key to food security. An establishment can apply prevention by conducting a comprehensive vulnerability assessment.

What is a vulnerability assessment?

A vulnerability assessment, (VA), is a checklist for a food establishment or food operation to make their own self-assessments regarding food security throughout their facility. When completed, the assessment will reveal the establishment's vulnerabilities and the ability to respond to threats.

What is TEAM?

TEAM as defined by the National Restaurant Association stands for Threat, Evaluation, Assessment and Management approach. It is a method used to identify hazards in a processing facility, restaurant or anywhere in the food chain. The system is similar to HACCP but it focuses on points where food can be intentionally contaminated.

Why should a food establishment be concerned about food security?

A restaurant or other food establishment is at great economical risk if it chooses to ignore the threat of food security. An incident can occur along any point of the production chain and greatly impact the business. Knowledge of the source and condition of what is coming into one's establishment is as important as the quality assurance and presentation of the finished product. Not only can an incident affect the public opinion of the establishment but it can also affect the morale of its employees.

Conducting a food security vulnerability assessment will enable your facility to:

- Develop plans to increase safety and security awareness
- Identify those areas that need security improvements
- Create policies to handle food security events
- Reduce potential liability